MARVEL
PSR 56

BEDARD
CALAFIORE
McKENNA

EXILES®

BUMP IN THE NIGHT 2 of 3

A-ARE YOU *SURE* ABOUT THIS, LADY BLINK?

SORRY, BEAK, BUT IT *HAS* TO BE THIS WAY.

PART II OF III

SLASH

RRRAWWWKK-!

OH--! OH, MY--

I...I AM ME AGAIN!

...THE MAGIC SPELL...

...ALL OF US... TRANSFORMED INTO BARBARIANS...!

IT ALL REALLY HAPPENED... DIDN'T IT?

WHO'S NEXT?

SO THE REST OF NEW YORK... STILL LOOKS LIKE A TOLKIEN NOVEL?

YUP. THIS WAS PROBABLY THE SUBWAY.

WHAT A RELIEF TO BE BACK IN MY OWN GARMENTS.

WHAT LITTLE THERE ARE OF THEM. 'COURSE, I WEAR EVEN LESS...

WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT, MORPH? YOU ALWAYS DRESS FROM HEAD TO FOOT.

AU CONTRAIRE, NAMORA--THESE MAY LOOK LIKE CLOTHES, BUT WHEN I SHAPESHIFT, DO YOU REALLY THINK THAT'S COTTON DOING A QUICK-CHANGE? ...

I BELIEVE THE WORD YOU'RE SEARCHING FOR IS EWWWWW!

TAKE ANOTHER WHACK AT HIM, ILLYANA.

AND GET HIS COOTIES ON MY SOUL-SWORD...?

GUYS? I DO NOT MEAN TO WET THE BLANKET, BUT HEATHER IS STILL SICK.

C'MON, DOCTOR HUDSON--"PHYSICIAN, HEAL THYSELF"! JUST TURN INTO **SASQUATCH** AND LET YOUR **HEALING FACTOR** BURN OUT WHATEVER'S AILING YOU.

CAL...IT'S HARD TO **EXPLAIN**, BUT...I'M **AFRAID** TO BECOME SASQUATCH HERE. SOMETHING DOESN'T **FEEL** RIGHT...

YOU SURE THAT'S NOT THE **FEVER** TALKING? I MEAN, SHOULDN'T YOU AT LEAST **TRY**...?

NO!

IF THY FRIEND'S ABILITIES ARE **MYSTICAL** IN NATURE, THEN **TRUST** HER INTUITION.

I TRUST HER JUST FINE. IT'S **YOU** I'M NOT SO SURE ABOUT!

ONE--THAT'S MY **GIRLFRIEND** YOU'RE GRABBING.

TWO--HEATHER GOT HER POWERS FROM **GAMMA RADIATION**, NOT MAGIC.

SHOULDN'T THE GREAT **KULAN GATH** BE ABLE TO SENSE THAT?

MOCK ME AT THY PERIL, **MIMIC-MAN.**

IT'S JUST "MIMIC," KULEY. WHAT IS IT WITH YOU, ANYWAY, THAT YOU NEVER GET PEOPLE'S ***NAMES*** RIGHT?

STAND ASIDE, MAN-SPIDER.

I REST MY CASE.

WHADDAYA SAY WE GET BACK TO THE ***REASON*** WE'RE ALL HERE--EVICTING THE HALLOWEEN REFUGEES WHO'VE TAKEN OVER TOWN!

YES. THAT *IS* OUR PARAMOUNT CONCERN. DID NOT THINE TALISMAN ***AGREE***, LADY BLINK?

YEAH...THE TALLUS SAYS WE'RE SUPPOSED TO HELP YOU.

"TALLUS." FASCINATING. AND DOST THOU ***OBEY*** ITS EVERY COMMAND...?

PRETTY MUCH. IT'S ALL PART OF OUR ***JOB***.

WE CALL OURSELVES THE ***EXILES*** BECAUSE WE'RE THROWN INTO ALTERNATE REALITIES TO PULL WORLDS BACK FROM THE BRINK OF DESTRUCTION.

SOMETIMES THE ***MISSIONS*** WE'RE GIVEN ARE EASY TO LIVE WITH, BUT TOO OFTEN WE'RE EXPECTED TO TEAM UP WITH, WELL...WITH PEOPLE LIKE ***YOU***.

INDEED.

IF THOU ART TO SUCCOR MY OVERTHROW OF ***ZARATHOS***, I SHALL ENLIGHTEN THEE ON WHAT WILL BE ***REQUIRED***.

KNOW YE THAT MY ***MASTER SPELL*** TRANSMOGRIFIED THE ISLE OF MANHATTAN INTO A HYBOREAN AGE CITY-STATE AKIN TO THOSE I KNEW IN MY YOUTH...

...I DESIRED TO ***EXPAND*** THE BORDERS OF MY NEW KINGDOM, SO ALL PERSONS WITH EXTRAORDINARY TALENTS WERE BROUGHT UNDER MY THRALL.

ALL SAVE THE ***MAN-SPIDER***, WHOM I INTENDED TO ***TORTURE*** AT MY LEISURE FOR AN EARLIER INSULT AGAINST ME.

STORY OF MY LIFE--I'M ***ALWAYS*** LEFT OUT OF THE PARTY.

BUT IN RAISING MY ARMY, I UNWITTINGLY RELEASED A DEMON NAMED ZARATHOS--KNOWN AS THE ***GHOST RIDER*** IN BYGONE DAYS.

ZARATHOS ***USURPED*** MY THRONE, AND NOW MAKES HIS STRONGHOLD IN THIS ***DOMED TEMPLE***, FROM WHENCE HE DISPATCHES HIS MINIONS TO HUNT ME DOWN.

ZARATHOS KNEW THE ***KEY*** TO MY MASTER SPELL IS THIS TALISMAN NECKLACE, WHICH HE ***TORE*** FROM MY THROAT MOMENTS AFTER I FREED HIM.

IT IS ***THIS ITEM*** WE MUST STEAL BACK IF WE ARE TO DEPOSE THE DEMON DESPOT.

WELL, IF YOU NEED SOMETHING ***STOLEN*** IN THE BLINK OF AN EYE, I'M YOUR GAL.

THE BIG QUESTION IS-- ***WHO'S*** GUARDING THE TRINKET?

MOST OF THE FORMER SO-CALLED SUPER HEROES NOW SERVE ZARATHOS...

...BUT HIS PRINCIPAL SERVITORS ARE THE VAMPIRE LORD MORBIUS, HIS HUNTING PARTNER WENDIGO, AND THE CAPTAIN OF THE VIZIER'S GUARD, JACK RUSSELL--CURSED TO BE A WEREWOLF BY NIGHT.

THEM...?! GET REAL! WENDIGO'S STRONG, BUT HE'S DUMB AS A POST. AND THOSE OTHER TWO ARE A JOKE BACK WHERE I COME FROM!

NEED I REMIND THEE THAT WE ARE NOT IN THY NATIVE LAND, MIMIC?

HERE IN NEW HYBOREA, ONE'S POWER IS TWISTED AND AUGMENTED BY ONE'S CONNECTION TO THE SUPERNATURAL...

...THUS, EVEN MY MYSTICAL MIGHT WAS ECLIPSED BY THAT OF ZARATHOS, WHO HAILS FROM THE NETHER PLANES.

AND YET, EVEN HE HAS HIS LIMITS.

HIS ATTEMPTS TO EXTEND MY MASTER SPELL BEYOND ITS CURRENT BOUNDARIES HAVE COME TO NAUGHT.

HIS MINIONS SACRIFICED EVERY CHILD IN THE REALM, BUT THE FRONTIER REMAINS FIXED.

THEY...KILLED ALL THE KIDS?! WHAT WAS THAT SUPPOSED TO ACCOMPLISH?

CHILD SACRIFICE IS HOW I CAST MY SPELL IN THE FIRST PLACE.

OPEN UP! CAPTAIN OF THE GUARD!

PUBLIC HOUSE

BANG BANG BANG

CAPTAIN RUSSELL--! I NEVER EXPECTED *YOU* TO COME IN PERSON...

I'M TOLD SIX OF YOUR GUESTS *DISAPPEARED* DURING THE NIGHT?

YESSIR! I'LL SHOW YOU WHAT I *FOUND* IN THEIR ROOM...

THOSE ARE *HIS* WEBS, RIGHT?

SNIFF SNIFF* EVEN IF HE HADN'T LEFT HIS SPOOR ALL OVER THESE WALLS, I'D RECOGNIZE THE SPIDER-MAN'S *SCENT* ANYWHERE.

YOU DID *WELL*, REPORTING THIS.

TH-THANK YOU! WILL THERE BE A *REWARD?*

IN A MANNER OF SPEAKING...

FWUMP

KRASH

...HUNGRY...

...LONELY...

...FREE...?

WHAT DO YOU REQUIRE OF SELENE?

...HAVE MERCY ON MY SOUL--THE BLACK QUEEN IS AMONG US!

DEFEND YOURSELF, CAPTAIN RUSSELL! I SHALL RAISE THE ALARM!

HOW TEDIOUS...

KREEEEEK-K

+GOOMPH+

NOW, EXPLAIN *WHY* YOU SUMMONED ME, OR MUST I *REND* YOU LIMB FROM LIMB...?

STOP *FLIRTING*, SELENE, THIS IS SERIOUS.

SIX *STRANGERS* ARRIVED WITH AN *OBJECT* THAT MAKES ZARATHOS NERVOUS. HE SAYS IT SENDS "RIPPLES ACROSS THE FABRIC OF REALITY," IF THAT MAKES ANY SENSE TO YOU.

YES...I DO SENSE SOMETHING *OTHERWORLDLY* OUT THERE. WERE THESE STRANGERS SOME SORT OF DEMONS, OR FAIRY-FOLK?

I THINK NOT, BUT IT APPEARS THEY'RE IN LEAGUE WITH THE SPIDER-MAN.

THEN...KULAN GATH MAY HAVE *SUMMONED* THEM TO--

EXACTLY. THE MOMENT WE'VE LONG AWAITED IS AT HAND. ARE YOU READY TO PLAY *YOUR* PART?

YES. OF COURSE. I'LL BE *IN PLACE* WHEN THEY MAKE THEIR MOVE.

GOOD. I'D BEST GET BACK TO THE TEMPLE BEFORE I AM *MISSED.*

AREN'T YOU FORGETTING YOUR *SNACK?*

HE'S *ALL YOURS,* SELENE. YOU'LL NEED YOUR *STRENGTH.*

YOU *DO* LOVE ME!

=MMPH!=

JUST BE QUICK. WE HAVEN'T MUCH TIME.

'TIS A SHAME NOT TO *SAVOR* A SOUL...

...BUT A MEAL *IS* A MEAL...

JUST GET US PAST THE GATE, BLINK. ILLYANA AND I WILL TAKE IT FROM THERE

DOESN'T LOOK SO TOUGH IN BROAD DAYLIGHT...

SPEAKING OF WHICH, IS IT NOT *FOLLY* TO ATTACK AT MIDDAY?

I HAVE *DECADES* OF MILITARY EXPERIENCE, AND WITH THIS SMALL A FORCE, I WOULD *DEFINITELY* WAIT FOR COVER OF DARKNESS.

ORDINARILY, YOU WOULD BE RIGHT, BUT CONSIDER *WHO* WE'RE UP AGAINST...

"...*MORBIUS* SLEEPS BY DAY. *WENDIGO* STAYS AT HIS SIDE, LIKE A BIG WATCHDOG.

"I SAW IT MYSELF WHEN I WAS A SCULLERY MAID IN THE TEMPLE.

"THE CAPTAIN OF THE GUARD IS ALSO SLIGHTLY LESS DANGEROUS DURING THE DAY. HE CAN'T TURN INTO A WEREWOLF TILL THE SUN GOES DOWN.

"AT LEAST...I *THINK* HE CAN'T."

"ZARATHOS SLEEPS NOW, TOO, BUT OUT OF *CHOICE*--NOT BECAUSE HE *HAS* TO. NIGHT IS WHEN HE HOLDS COURT.

"OUR *BEST* CHANCE IS FOR ME TO CUT THE TALISMAN FROM HIS NECK WITH MY SOULSWORD...BUT I CANNOT *REACH* H.M WITHOUT YOUR HELP."

SO YOU GO IN *QUIET-LIKE* WHILE WE DISTRACT THE GUARDS OUT HERE. SOUNDS PRETTY STRAIGHTFORWARD TO ME.

DON'T GET COCKY, BUSTER...

"...THERE ARE PLENTY OF HEAVYWEIGHTS ON THE VIZIER'S GUARD WHO DON'T HAVE PROBLEMS WORKING THE *DAY SHIFT.*"

HEATHER, I THINK IT'S BEST IF YOU **STAY**--

I WILL **NOT** JUST SIT HERE WONDERING IF YOU'RE GETTING KILLED!

'SIDES...YOU SHOULD WORRY MORE ABOUT... **WHY** KULAN GATH DIDN'T COME ALONG...FOR THE BIG RAID **HIMSELF.**

EASY-- BECAUSE IF ZARATHOS **CAPTURES** H.M, THAT'S ALL SHE WROTE FOR PLANET EARTH!

"WITH KULEY ON HIS ALTAR, ZARATHOS COULD MAKE THE MASTER SPELL **GLOBAL** IN THE TIME IT TAKES TO CUT OUT HIS LITTLE BLACK HEART."

JUST GET US **INSIDE.** THE MINUTE WE SNATCH HIS TALISMAN, I **GUARANTEE** YOU KULAN GATH WILL SHOW UP TO COLLECT.

NOT THAT WE'D ACTUALLY...GIVE IT **BACK** TO HIM. ALL THE TALLUS SAID...WAS FOR US TO "PUT HIM BACK ON HIS THRONE."

RIGHT, SPIDEY...?

BLOOOONK

CAPTAIN RUSSELL! THE TEMPLE IS UNDER ATTACK!

THREE STRANGERS JUST MATERIALIZED AT THE SOUTH GATE AND ENGAGED THE SENTRIES IN BATTLE!

THREE, YOU SAY?

MUSTER EVERYONE ON DUTY TO REPEL THE INVADERS. I SHALL FALL BACK TO THE SANCTUM AND PROTECT THE MASTER.

WILL YOU UNLEASH THE WENDIGO?

ONLY IF YOU FAIL, SISTER VOODOO-- IN WHICH CASE I'LL FEED YOU TO WENDIGO! NOW GET TO WORK!

BLLLINK

LOOKS ALL CLEAR IN HERE

WE'D BETTER HUSTLE..

"...YOUR FRIENDS OUTSIDE WON'T BE ABLE TO KEEP UP THE DIVERSION FOR LONG!"

BEWARE! MORE ARE JOINING THE FRAY!

THEN BY CROM, THEY'LL TASTE MY SAVAGE SWORD!

JUST SHUT UP AND FIGHT, MORPH!

TZOT

WHAM

GYAHHH!

-NNNFF- .. MIMIC! I COULD USE SOME HELP HERE .!

FINISH THEM!

EH? THE GROUND--!

WHAT FOUL TRICKERY IS THIS?!

SHWUMPFF

HURK

SWFF

WHULP

FUMP

...

WHAT THE HECK JUST HAPPENED?

I JUST SAVED YOUR SKINS--FOR NOW.

WHO ARE YOU? WHY ARE YOU HELPING US?

I AM SELENE, KNOWN TO SOME AS THE BLACK QUEEN...

"...AND YOU ARE NOT THE ONLY ONES WHO WISH TO SEE ZARATHOS DEPOSED."

MOST OF THEM WILL SMOTHER DOWN THERE, BUT THE GROUND WON'T HOLD THEM ALL.

BEST WE HASTEN TO JOIN YOUR FRIENDS INSIDE.

SO MORBIUS WAS RIGHT ABOUT YOU AFTER ALL. I SUPPOSE HE HAD TO BE RIGHT ABOUT SOMETHING...

HE ALSO THINKS YOU'VE BEEN *HOLDING BACK*--THAT YOU NEEDN'T WAIT TILL *SUNSET* TO ASSUME YOUR WOLFEN GUISE.

CARE TO SHOW ME *THAT* TRICK ONE FINAL TIME BEFORE SUFFERING MY *PENANCE STARE?*

RRARHHHH

YESSS...WHINE LIKE THE DOG YOU *ARE*...YOUR CRIMES, TOO *NUMEROUS* TO COUNT, YET *RELIVE* THEM ALL AT ONCE...

...EVEN A MONSTER LIKE YOU CANNOT LONG STAND AGAINST HIS *INNER DEMONS!*

YIPE! YIPE!

YIPE! YIPE!

WHAT WOULD YOU HAVE *DONE* WITH THE KEY TO MY KINGDOM, HMMM?

...WH--

LOOKING FOR SOMETHING?

HRRARRRHHH

ACK--!

HEY!

WHAK

PITY THOU LACKETH A "SPIDER-SENSE"...

...THOUGH IT *HARDLY* PROTECTED THE MAN-SPIDER FROM MY *MAGICKS*, IN THE END...

SLAM

WHAT IS *HAPPENING* IN THERE?

I'M NOT SURE...

NEVER MIND THAT--

--WE'VE GOT TROUBLE RIGHT *HERE!*

=YAWN= IT'S GETTING SO I CANNOT CATCH A DECENT DAY'S *SLEEP* AROUND HERE...

TO BE CONCLUDED!